



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Buying Insurance and Conducting a Household Inventory

- Having adequate insurance coverage can help to minimize the economic consequences of a disaster. Unfortunately, many people affected by disasters are underinsured and some are not insured at all.
 - If you own a home buy, at a minimum, full replacement or replacement cost coverage. This means the structure can be replaced up to the limits specified in the policy. Also look for a policy that covers the replacement cost of your possessions.
 - If you rent, buy renter's insurance, which pays for damaged, destroyed, or stolen personal property.
 - Update your policy periodically to reflect inflation and major improvements and purchases.
- Standard insurance policies for renters and homeowners do not cover certain types of losses, including losses due to flooding. If you live in a flood-prone area, obtain insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program (See Sections 3.2 & 15.1)
- To facilitate the recovery of any losses following a disaster event, you should develop a Household Inventory documenting household items.
 - Go from room to room and make an itemized list that describes each item, when you bought it, and its value.
 - Record model and serial numbers for your television, computers, and major appliances.
 - Taking pictures or videotapes of items can be very helpful when making claims. You should likewise photograph the exterior of your home including landscaping and exterior improvements. Photograph cars, boats, and recreational vehicles.
 - Update your household inventory annually.
 - Keep an updated copy of your household inventory in a safety deposit box or another secure location.

Adapted from resource material developed by the Illinois Extension Service entitled the "Household and Personal Property Inventory Book"